

Dateline DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Health Disparities Conference

Closing the Health Care Divide: Eliminating Disparities for Racial and Ethnic Minority Communities was the theme for Maryland's first-ever disparity conference.

"A lot of good ideas were exchanged," Dr. Carlessia H. Hussein, director of the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, said of the event held in June. "Our aim was to increase awareness among health care professionals, providers and educators on health disparity issues, and I believe we more than accomplished that goal."



Dr. Donald Wilson, (above) Dean and Vice President for Medical Affairs at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, presented the keynote address on "Do All Americans Receive the Same Quality Health Care? Does It Matter?"

Dean Wilson noted that one of the greatest challenges facing our nation is the elimination of racial

and ethnic health disparities, and the continued improvement of health for all who live in the U.S. Members of minority groups have been the 'invisible' people in the health care delivery and education systems in this country, he said.

Various breakout sessions focused on health professional education, identification of funding strategies, measuring disparities, and access to quality services.

"There is nothing new about health disparities," Dr. Hussein said. "We are beyond identifying the problem — we used this conference to establish priorities and develop recommendations for Statewide action to eliminate these disparities."

Nearly 300 people attended. Information about health disparities is available on the DHMH Web site at www.dhmh.state.md.us/hd.



Charlene Croxton, from the Office of Community Relations, helps register a conference participant.



Secretary Sabatini accepts an award from Dr. Hussein during the disparities conference.

Beasman Retires After 18 Years

Bob Beasman, Director of General Services, is trading a staff of 30 for the opportunity to give piggyback rides to his three young grandchildren.

Bob joined DHMH in 1986 as chief of the Division of Engineering and Maintenance. After holding that position for 10 years, he became director for the General Services Administration (GSA), a post he has held for eight years.

And during that time, he's had a chance to see a lot.

"Each governor's administration has brought with it many changes, so I've seen State government evolve over the years," Beasman said. "What we have now is a philosophy that's about working smarter with less, and consolidating resources to get the job done more efficiently."

Continued

Beasman Retires *Continued*

After so many years, Beasman naturally has a few accomplishments he's especially proud to discuss.



"I like to think I've improved the communication within the administration and the overall efficiency of services provided by GSA," he said. "But there have been some achievements that stand out."

One of these was providing centrifugal cooling units for the Carter Center in an emergency situation when the mental health facility's existing cooling system failed.

"It was important to restore a comfortable living environment to the staff and patients as quickly as possible, and we were able to meet that challenge," he said.

Other memorable accomplishments include providing a new electrical system and HVAC unit for the Deer's Head Center, and the re-carpeting and modular furnishing of the entire 201 West Preston Street building.

A true native Baltimorean, Bob graduated from Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in 1951, and then earned a bachelor's degree in engineering from Johns Hopkins University in 1964. He went on to complete a master's degree in theology from St. Mary's Seminary and University in 1987.

Not a man to switch jobs frequently, Beasman spent the first 32 years of his career working for just two local companies — Crown Cork and Seal Company

Calendar of Events

Tuesday - Wednesday, July 20 - 21 — **Blood Drive**, O'Connor Building Lobby, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Please call Stephanie Brown at 410-767-6403 for more information or to make an appointment.

Thursday, October 7 — *conference*: **Suicide Prevention Conference**. Please contact Henry Westray, Jr., at 410-402-8494 or by e-mail at westrayh@dhmh.state.md.us for more information. Sponsored by the Governor's Interagency Workshop on Youth Suicide Prevention.

Thursday and Friday, November 4 - 5 — *conference*: **2004 Maryland Rural Summit**; Solomons, MD. Please log on to www.rural.state.md.us for more information. Co-sponsored by the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health.

Youth Weight Loss Study

The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health is conducting a weight loss study for children between the ages of eight and 15.

If you have a child who is overweight but otherwise healthy, he or she may be eligible to participate in a long-term weight control study. Parents will also be asked to participate.

Additional information is available by calling 410-847-3600 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

and Bethlehem Steel. In between these jobs, he served a two year stint with the U.S. Army.

Bob is looking forward to spending his spare time with his wife Cynthia, and their two daughters and three young grandchildren, all of whom live close enough to be frequent visitors. In addition to giving his grandchildren piggyback rides or tying their shoelaces, you might find Bob gardening or working on projects around his home in Bel Air — just another stage in his busy career.

Editor's Note: Thanks to Tara Snyder, Community Health Educator in the Center of Health Promotion, Education and Tobacco Use Prevention, for writing this article.



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Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor
Michael S. Steele
Lieutenant Governor
Nelson J. Sabatini
Secretary, DHMH
Karen Black
Director of Public Relations
John Hammond
Editor

DHMH Office of Public Relations
201 West Preston Street, Room 506
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Phone: 410-767-6490
FAX: 410-333-7525
TTY: 1-800-735-2258

To contribute to ***Dateline DHMH*** or for further information, contact John Hammond, Office of Public Relations, 410-767-6490, hammondj@dhmh.state.md.us. Please visit our Web site at www.dhmh.state.md.us.